

## SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL

**50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012**

INTRODUCED BY

DISCUSSION DRAFT

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE  
IMPACT OF ALLOWING THE USE OF MEDICAL CANNABIS FOR TREATMENT OF  
SYMPTOMS FOR CERTAIN DISEASE GROUPS, THE IMPACT OF MEDICAL  
CANNABIS ON HARM REDUCTION AND THE POTENTIAL THAT MEDICAL  
CANNABIS HAS FOR REDUCING HEALTH CARE COSTS.

WHEREAS, the Lynn and Erin Compassionate Use Act was  
signed into law in July 2007, allowing the use of medical  
cannabis for treatment of symptoms for certain disease groups  
specified by the department of health; and

WHEREAS, research studies conducted by Wendy Swift, Peter  
Gates and Paul Dillon at the national drug and alcohol research  
centre located at the university of New South Wales in Sydney,  
Australia, which were published in the October 4, 2005 *Harm  
Reduction Journal*, indicate that the use of cannabis provides

1 "substantial relief of symptoms" from certain conditions; and

2 WHEREAS, the Swift, Gates and Dillon studies found that  
3 medical cannabis users perceive cannabis to be superior to  
4 other medications in that they experienced fewer undesirable  
5 side effects and greater pain relief, with sixty-two percent of  
6 the patients in the study decreasing or discontinuing the use  
7 of other, more adverse medications; and

8 WHEREAS, research studies conducted by Dr. Amanda Reiman  
9 at the university of California Berkeley's school of social  
10 welfare, published in the December 3, 2009 *Harm Reduction*  
11 *Journal*, found that eighty-five percent of the patients in the  
12 study had significantly fewer adverse side effects from medical  
13 cannabis than from prescribed medications, and more than sixty-  
14 five percent of the patients using cannabis as a prescription-  
15 drug substitute experienced reduced potential for withdrawal  
16 symptoms; and

17 WHEREAS, over fifty-seven percent of the patients in Dr.  
18 Reiman's study felt that cannabis helped them manage the  
19 symptoms related to their conditions more effectively than  
20 prescription drugs; and

21 WHEREAS, research studies out of the university of  
22 California San Francisco, published in the November 3, 2011  
23 *Journal of Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics*, indicate  
24 that the subjects' pain was significantly decreased after the  
25 addition of cannabis-specific interventions in a hospital

1 setting; and

2 WHEREAS, the university of California San Francisco  
3 studies find that cannabis-specific interventions may allow for  
4 opiate treatment at lower doses, with fewer side effects in  
5 patients;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
7 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of health be requested  
8 to undertake or commission a study on the potential benefits of  
9 using medical cannabis to reduce patients' use of narcotics and  
10 other pharmaceuticals in treating the symptoms of the disease  
11 groups for which the department of health authorizes the use of  
12 medical cannabis; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of health be  
14 requested to include in the medical cannabis study an  
15 investigation of the impact of the use of medical cannabis in  
16 avoiding the harm caused by the use of and addiction to other  
17 drugs, both prescription and illicit; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of health be  
19 requested to include in the medical cannabis study an  
20 investigation of the potential benefits of using medical  
21 cannabis to reduce health care expenditures; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of health be  
23 requested to present the findings of the study to the  
24 legislative health and human services committee and to the  
25 legislative finance committee by December 1, 2013; and

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1           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
2 transmitted to the secretary of health, the chair of the  
3 legislative health and human services committee and the chair  
4 and vice chair of the legislative finance committee.

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